

350-51), says: "In 1656 a flotilla of Ottawas appeared on the St. Lawrence led by two adventurous traders who had struck into the far west, and in 1660 another flotilla of sixty canoes loaded with peltry and manned by three hundred western Algonquins led by French voyageurs descended to the trading posts of France, doubtless the fruits of rich harvests garnered at the numerous posts of Georgian Bay, Lake Huron, Sault Ste. Marie, Mackinaw and the west." The annual fur fleets of the Hurons, from the first, by means of which Champlain penetrated to this, then savage region, and notably the one which brought the Jesuits upon the scene, described by Parkman ("Jesuits in North America," page 46), as consisting of "a hundred and forty canoes with six or seven hundred savages, etc.," continued down to the dispersion and testify to the extent of the contributions of the Huron country to the fur magazines at Quebec. Trading posts continued at Shebeshekong, Manitoulin and Drummond Island and other points on Lake Huron and Georgian Bay down to the latter part of the eighteenth century. Matchedash Bay and the Huron country, it will be seen, were the nurseries of an embryo trade in the west, as well as the pioneer movement in missionary enterprise and exploration.

The fur trade utilized the ancient "Toronto Portage," as well as the French River route. The venerable native highway connecting Lake Ontario and the Georgian Bay was a primitive route of a remote period, with picturesque waterways, long portages and wild forest scenery. The word "Toronto," appropriated by the city of that name, originally Toronto, signifies either "The place of meeting," or "Clumps of trees in the water;" more probably the former. In the Indian nomenclature of the old maps Humber Bay is named Taron-to Bay; Lake Simcoe is called Taronto Lake; Severn River, Taronto River, and Matchedash Bay, Taronto Bay. Even the numerous bodies of water connecting Lake Simcoe with the Bay of Quinte were called the "Taronto chain of lakes," the term having reference originally, it is thought by competent authorities, to a central gathering place among the Huron tribes, in the vicinity of Lake Simcoe, the trails and portages leading thereto being known by this common designation. Hence in the language of exploration and the fur trade, the regions bordering on Matchedash Bay were known as the Lake Huron terminus of the Toronto Portage, which began at the mouth of the Humber River, following that stream for some distance, thence crossing the height of land to the Holland River flowing into Lake Simcoe, traversing both it and